

ADVERTISEMENT.

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A LETTER

TO THE

"DELUDED PEOPLE."

"Unhappy men, whom schoolmasters, for
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"Or cruel parents, taught to read and write!
"Why need you read? Why were you taught
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"Why write your names? A mark would do
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CHURCHILL.

London, March 20th, 1817.

"POOR DELUDED PEOPLE,"

In writing the last Number I was pressed for time. The Hampshire Parsons and Lockhart the Brave had taken up those hours, which ought to have been devoted to a better purpose. However, as that was the *last* public meeting, under the old laws of the land, and, as the conduct of our adversaries was somewhat singular and discovered their temper, it was not altogether useless to put an account of it upon record.

We now live, those of us who may be said to live at all, under a *new set of laws*. First, every man and woman is now liable to be seized, at any moment, and to be put into a prison, and kept there, for any length of time, cut off from all communication with friends, wife, children, or any body else whatever; and also from pen, ink, paper, books; in short, any man, or woman, may now be taken up, sent to any prison in the kingdom however distant, without any charge being made known to them, without their knowing what is alledged against them, without having any idea of who

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adjudged felony without benefit of clergy, and the offenders therein shall be adjudged felons, and shall suffer death as in cases of felony, without benefit of clergy.

And be it further enacted, That if any one or more justice or justices of the peace present at any meeting requiring such notice as aforesaid, shall think fit to order any person or persons who shall at such meeting proceed to propound or maintain any proposition for altering any thing by law established, otherwise than by the Authority of the King, Lords, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, or shall wilfully and advisedly make any proposition, or hold any discourse for the purpose of inciting and stirring up the people to hatred or contempt of the person of his Majesty, his heirs or successors, or the government and constitution of this realm as by law established, to be taken into custody to be dealt with according to law; and in case the said justice or justices or any of them, or any peace officer acting under their or any of their orders, shall be obstructed in taking into custody any person or persons so ordered to be taken into custody, then and in such case it shall be lawful for any such justice or justices thereupon to make or cause to be made such proclamation as aforesaid in manner aforesaid; and if any persons to the number of twelve or more, being required or commanded by such proclamation to disperse themselves and peaceably depart as aforesaid, shall to the number of twelve or more, notwithstanding such proclamation made, remain or continue together by the space of one hour after such command or request made by proclamation, that then such continuing together to the number of twelve or more after such command or request made by proclamation, shall be adjudged felony without benefit of clergy, and the offenders therein shall be adjudged felons, and shall suffer death as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy.

And be it further enacted, That every justice and justices of the peace, sheriff, under sheriff, mayor and other head officer aforesaid, is and are hereby authorized and empowered, on notice or knowledge of any such meeting or assembly as is hereinbefore mentioned, to resort to the place where such meeting or assembly

shall be, or shall be intended to be holden, or to any part thereof, and there to do or order, or cause to be done, all such acts matters and things as the case may require, which they are hereby enabled to do or order to be done, or which they are otherwise by law enabled to do or order to be done; and it shall be lawful for all and every justices of the peace, sheriff, under sheriff, mayor and other head officer as aforesaid, to take and require the assistance of any number of constables or other officers of the peace within their respective districts, or within the district or place wherein every such meeting as hereinbefore mentioned shall be holden, which constables and other officers of the peace are hereby required to attend accordingly such justices, sheriff, under sheriff, mayor or other head officer respectively, and to give such assistance as shall be necessary for the due execution of this act.

And be it further enacted, That if such persons so assembled as aforesaid, or twelve or more of them, after any proclamation made in manner aforesaid, shall continue together and not disperse themselves within one hour, that then it shall and may be lawful to and for every justice of the peace, sheriff or under sheriff, of the county where such assembly shall be, and also to and for every high or petty constable and other peace officer within such county, and also to and for every mayor, justice of the peace, sheriff, and other head officer, high or petty constable, and other peace officer, of any city or town corporate where such assembly shall be, and to and for such other person and persons as shall be commanded to be assisting unto any such justice of the peace, sheriff, or under sheriff, mayor or other head officer aforesaid, who are hereby authorized and empowered to command all his majesty's subjects, of age and ability, to be assisting to them therein, to seize and apprehend, and they are hereby required to seize and apprehend such persons so assembled and continuing together after proclamation made as aforesaid, and forthwith to carry the person or persons so apprehended before one or more of his majesty's justices of the peace of the county or place where

To be Continued.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

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is their a user; without having even a *hearing* from any body, and without their very children knowing how they are treated, or what prison they are in. And, after all, if a man out-live these sufferings; if he do not die in prison, his time of remaining there is quite uncertain. It *may* be for a short, or for a long, time; and, if the law be continued in force, it may be for many, many years. The absolute power of imprisoning men in this way is lodged in any one of the Secretaries of State, or, in any six Privy Councillors. This, therefore, is the state, in which we are *all* now placed, except the Members of the *two Houses of Parliament* themselves, who cannot be thus imprisoned, without the House being first *informed of the cause*, and without the consent of the House, who would, of course, hear the accused party in his defence. But, all the rest of us are liable to be taken out of our shops, fields, or beds, and imprisoned and kept in prison, in the manner, that I have above described.

The *Next Act* makes it DEATH to attempt to *seduce* SOLDIERS or sailors from *their duty*. Now, therefore, my "poor deluded" friends, you ought to bear in mind, that, if any one of you were to ask a soldier to quit his post, or to refrain from doing any thing that he had been ordered to do, or to do any thing that he had been ordered not to do, you would be liable to be *hanged* upon the oath of that soldier. If, for instance, any man, sitting in a public house with a soldier, were to hold a conversation with the soldier, however carelessly, which might be construed to have for its object to induce the soldier not to obey any command of his officers, such man would be liable to be *hanged*. If a mother, wife, or sweet-heart, were to endeavour to induce a son, a husband, or lover, to desert, she would be liable to be *hanged*. If a wife, or daughter, were to endeavour to induce a soldier to wink at the escape of a husband, or a father, in pursuit of whom that soldier had been sent, such wife, or

daughter, would be liable to be *hanged*. If a son, seeing a soldier about to plunge a bayonet into the body of his father by command of his superior (as in case of riot, &c.;) if such son were to endeavour to persuade the soldier not to obey the command, such son would be liable to be *hanged*. Supposing a son to be the soldier, in such a case, and his mother were to fling herself before him and scream out to him to spare his father's life, such mother would for such offence, be liable to be *hanged*. And, observe, this law is now made *perpetual*; that is to say, it is intended not to last for any *limited time*, but to be *always the law in future*. — Therefore, take care. These are cases which *may* never exist; but such is the letter of the Law.

The *Third Act* relates to public Meetings, to Clubs or Societies, and Reading Rooms and other Places for Reading. As to public Meetings, there can be no more, *except such as the Sheriffs, Mayors, and Magistrates approve of*; and, *deluded as you are*, you know very well what sort of Meetings they will allow of. Seven house-holders may call a meeting by public NOTICE; but, they must sign their Notice and lodge it with the Clerk of the Peace; and, when the meeting takes place, *any single Magistrate* may come, and, *if he chooses*, disperse it; and, if any speaker utter any thing which the Magistrate *may think* calculated to *stir up the people to hatred or contempt of the government*, the Magistrate may take such speaker into custody. And, if any number of people exceeding twelve remain together after the meeting is ordered to disperse; or, if any one *resist* the authority of the Magistrate in any way upon these occasions; all such persons are to *suffer death*. So that, as you see, no meeting can now be held without the consent of Sheriff, Mayor, Magistrate, or some person in authority; for, to suppose, that, under such a law, any other sort of meeting will take place is nonsense. Suppose

for instance, that seven of us, in Hampshire, were to call a meeting by public Notice, Parson Baines of Exton, or any other Magistrate, might come to it, and if he chose, order us all to disperse in an hour upon pain of death. Or, when any of us began to speak, if we talked about *Sinecures*, *Taxes*, or *Seats*, or any thing else, no matter what, which Parson Baines might think calculated to bring the government into hatred or contempt, he might seize us and imprison us; and, if any one resisted the seizure, he would be liable to suffer death. This being now the law, I leave you to guess, whether any Meetings will be again held, except those, which are called by persons in authority; and what sort of meetings those are you know well enough.

As to *Clubs* and *Societies*, none can now exist for any political purpose. I do not see how it is possible for any man to belong to any such society, without subjecting himself to the pains and penalties of this law.

Then comes the part of the law that is levelled against the press. There are many places, where people meet to read. They used to meet to read the Register. One person read, and the rest listened, so that a single Register served for a hundred or two of persons; and by this method the heavy expence occasioned by the stamp, &c. was so divided as to make it nothing at all. There are what are called *Reading Rooms* all over the kingdom. In most large towns there are several of these. At these places books, pamphlets, and newspapers are bought into a common stock by the subscribers to the room, who go when they like and read at the room. The books, pamphlets, and newspapers are bought, or taken in, by a vote of the majority of the subscribers; and in most cases, the publications inculcate different political principles and views, because, generally, men like to hear both sides. The Magistrates and Parsons have long had great sway in these rooms, and have kept

out of them, very frequently, every work that they disliked. The Register, for instance, has long been banished from the most of them, as it has been from the Mess Rooms of the army and navy; and my "*Paper against Gold*," which now surpasses in sale any publication that ever was heard of in London, except the Register, and which is so well calculated to enlighten the nation upon the most important of all subjects at this moment, and the events so clearly foretold in which are now developing themselves in such a tremendous manner; even this work, which is purely on political economy, and has nothing at all to do with party politics; even this work was shut out of the Reading Rooms with the most persevering obstinacy. Still however, there was no positive law to prevent any particular work, or works of any description, from being read in these Rooms; and, the truth is, that the change of times and circumstances began to open these places to works in favour of economy and reform. Now therefore this new law puts all these Rooms, as well as all Places for Lecturing, whether House, Room, other Building, or Field, under the superintendence and power of the Magistrates. There is now to be no Reading Place, or Place for giving out publications to be read, no Lecturing place, no Debating place, without a Licence, granted at the sole pleasure of the Magistrates; and, the Magistrates may, whenever they please, revoke and put an end to the Licence. If the Magistrates find that any publications, which they may deem to be of an irreligious, immoral, or seditious TENDENCY, is kept in any such place, they may take away the Licence and put an end to the business of the man who keeps the Room or Place for reading. The Magistrates are, therefore, to be the sole judges of what ought to be read in such places and of what ought not to be read. They can refuse a licence to any man; and they can take a licence away from any man after he has got it. They are authorized

by this law to *demand admittance* into every such place, in order, of course, that they may hear, or see, what publications the man keeps to be read, or given out to be read; and, if they are *refused admittance*, they may, at once, put a stop to the man's business as keeper of such Reading Place. It is quite clear, then, that no publications can now be kept in any of these places, *except such as the Magistrates shall approve of*. If, for instance, a Reading Room at Southampton has taken in the Register, it is not very likely, that the Magistrates there will suffer the Master of the Room to have a Licence, unless upon condition of his throwing out the Register; and, if he suffer it to come in after he has got his Licence, it is not very likely, that he will be permitted to retain his Licence. So on with regard to all other publications which the Magistrates do not like; for, to be sure, *they* will look upon all such publications as having a *tendency* of an *immoral or seditious sort*. Hitherto it has been deemed sufficient to punish severely the authors, printers, and publishers of irreligious, immoral and seditious publications. If the works could be *proved* to the satisfaction of even a *Special Jury* to be libellous, the works were stopped and the parties punished. But, *now*, though a work be ever so *innocent* in the eye of the libel law, it may still be not so in the eye of a *Magistrate*, and then it is to be shut out of these Rooms, and the Keepers of these Rooms may possibly be ruined for suffering them to come into their Rooms, though brought in *by a vote of their Subscribers*.

Under such circumstances, it is quite obvious, that there will be no works, not even newspapers, suffered to be read, or kept, in Reading Places, *except such as the Magistrates, the most active of whom are the Parsons, approve of*. It is quite obvious, that *they* will now have the absolute power of *selecting* works for the gentlemen and tradesmen to read at all these numerous places; and that they will

let them have no works to read, which the government do not like they should read, there can, I suppose, be very little doubt. One consequence of this will be, a great diminution of the *Subscriptions* to Reading Rooms; for, it is impossible to believe, that the Subscribers will not revolt at the idea of placing themselves voluntarily under this odious species of superintendence and dictation; and, as to those, who have *now subscribed*, they have clearly a right *instantly to withdraw*, and not to pay one farthing from the day of the passing of the act, seeing that the act nullifies their previous engagement, and leaves them not to that free choice of publications, which they enjoyed under their contract with the Master of the Room. With respect to Public-houses, Inns, Coffee-houses, and the like, as the *granting or refusing* of their *Licences* depend already upon the *absolute will and pleasure* of the Magistrates, it would be foolish indeed to suppose, that any newspapers would, in future, be received in them, which the Magistrate shall *think* to contain any thing of an irreligious, immoral, or seditious **TENDENCY**. And, only think of the extent of this word *tendency*! Only think of the boundless extent of such a word, and of such a word being left to the interpretation of thousands of men! Suppose the editor of a newspaper to insert an article, which article recommended the *reduction of the salt tax*. What does this *tend* to? Why, to be sure, a Magistrate might *think*, to make the people *discontented* with the salt tax; to make them discontented with the salt tax would be, he might think, to make them discontented *with those who compel the people to pay it*; those who compel the people to pay it are *King, Lords, and Commons*; and, therefore, here is an article which *tends* to make the people *discontented with Kings, Lords, and Commons*, and which, of course, *tends* to produce hatred of them, and to bring about insurrection, treason, revolution, and blood and carnage. There

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is no bounds to this word *tendency*, and that, too, as left to the mere *opinion* of the Magistrate. Therefore it is manifest, that while the *direct* power will overawe and regulate and controul the Reading Rooms and such places, the *indirect* power will banish from *public houses* of all sorts, every publication, which is at all hostile to the views of the government; and, in short, that there will, in none of these places, be any reading, except on one side.

Hence will follow a great falling off in the bookselling and newspaper trades, in the amount of the newspaper and paper duty, in the paper-making trade, and in all the various emoluments, to which the making of paper, and the printing and binding and circulating of books and papers give rise. Another consequence will be, a disregard, a total disregard, for all that is permitted to be read. Those who disapprove of these new restraints will consider all that is now *permitted* in the Reading places as partial trash, intended to be crammed down their throats; and, even those, who have been mortified at the growing influence of opinions which they disliked, will soon begin to sicken at the effects of the accomplishment of their own wishes. They will soon begin to feel, that to triumph over argument by the force of penal Statutes, is a thing not to be *proud* of. They will very soon be *ashamed of their success*. They will very soon lose all relish for reading that which the law permits *not to be controverted*. They will soon perceive, that they are placed in the situation of a man, who being upon the point of defeat in a *boxing* match, has saved himself by resorting to the protection of a *dagger*. They will see their adversaries *retire* indeed, but retire amidst the applause and admiration of all the good and the brave, while they themselves have nothing to keep them in countenance but the unconsoling cheers of sophistry, selfishness, servility, and of cowardice without a parallel in the history of mankind.

This is the shameful state to which our adversaries are now reduced. The triumph is *ours*, not *theirs*. It was a combat of *argument*, and they have taken shelter under the shield of *physical force*. Yet, Mr. CANNING, amidst loud cheering, as is reported, accused *us* of foul play! He said, that we, who have *written in the cause of Reform*, have poisoned the sources of education; that we have turned the *capacity to read*, amongst the labouring people, to a most mischievous account; that we have acted like an enemy, who, too cowardly to meet our adversaries in the field, have attacked him *secretly* by putting poisonous drugs into the *Wells and Springs of Water*!

This comes with decency indeed from one of those, who have resorted to a Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act! If indeed, we had stopped the hawking of our enemy's publications while our own were permitted to be hawked freely; if I, for instance, had seized numerous poor creatures and put them in prison for selling Corruption's pamphlets, while I protected the sellers of my own; if I had caused scores of lying publications to be sent forth and *given away*, while Corruption had contented herself with a fair sale; if I, unable to *answer* Corruption, had sent out placards to be posted up against her in the dead of the night, while she scorned to resort to any such means against me. If this had been the conduct of the parties, then, indeed, I might justly have been accused of the most infamous foul play. But, exactly the reverse has been the fact. I have relied solely upon the power of *truth and of reason*; I have had no other aiders and abettors than these; I have trusted wholly to the honesty and the sound understandings of the people; and, *how have I been answered?*

But, if the people, if millions of people, if nine tenths of the whole nation, really are "*poor deluded creatures*," why has the delusion not been prevented? There are twenty thou-

sand Parsons, four or five thousand Lawyers, the two Universities, the two Houses of Parliament, many thousands of Magistrates, many hundreds of writers for pay. What! And, could not all these, with all their learning, and with all their weight, counteract the effect of one poor *Two-Penny Pamphlet*? For, you will observe, that *this* it was, which, at bottom, was the *main thing*! Lord Sidmouth, in his speech, clearly pointed it out, though he did not actually name it. He said, that *cheap* publications had found their way into the very cottages and hovels. And, he said very truly; but, what reason was this for suspending the Act of Habeas Corpus? He said, that the pamphlets had been submitted to the Law Officers, and that they were found to be written with *so much dexterity* that he was *sorry to say*, that, hitherto, the *Law-Officers could find in them nothing to prosecute*! And, what then? Why he proposed, in that very speech, the *Suspension of the Act of Habeas Corpus*! I would even now willingly disbelieve this report of the speech of Lord Sidmouth; but, from what has passed since, I am afraid that it was but too much like what the newspapers have reported.

Why not name me at once? Why not order me *not to write any more*? Mr. ELLIOT, one of the friends of Burke and of Lord Fitzwilliam, said, on the second day of the session, that the *designing men* were sending forth *poison* in their "venomous weekly publications." I will not tell this gentleman of what I might tell him; nor will I call his observations *venomous*; but, I ask him, if it was a venomous act to put a stop to all the *violences against machine owners and against bakers, butchers and farmers*?

Ten thousand of such men as he would not have been able to do this, which I alone did, and that, too, in the space of one month, and by the means of that publication, which he was pleased to call "venomous." But, again, if it was venom, that I

was sending forth, why was not the antidote administered? Or, does this gentleman suppose, that the superintendence of Reading Rooms, or, the Suspension of our Personal Safety, is the proper *antidote*? Is this the way to convince either me, or my readers, that we are in error? Are errors ever corrected in this way?

Oh, no! Mr. ELLIOT, you may be well assured, that, if the people have been "*deluded*," they are not to be put right by means like these; but, on the contrary, they will now not even listen to any thing that shall be written to them on the other side. If I were to be rendered silent, they would still, more firmly than ever, adhere to my doctrines. They would, and they will at any rate, treasure up all the *Little Books* that they have got.—They will sooner part with their shirts than they will part with them. As measures to close the people's eyes against these Books, the new laws have come *too late*. That which you call "*venom*," and which I call wholesome food for the mind, has *already been received* to repletion. Little more could have been done in the way of *inculcating principles*; if nothing at all were done in addition, those principles will never be eradicated, and never cease to actuate the minds of Englishmen; and, though at the bottom of a dungeon, I shall always have the consolation to reflect, that more, *many more*, than a million of my *Little Books* are in the hands of my countrymen.

Towards me above all men this treatment is most foul. I have never practised *delusion*; I have never courted *popularity*; I never fell into the cry against Tythes or that against the Corn bill; I have never endeavoured to set the poor against the rich; I have never been guilty of an attempt to practise delusion of any sort. My hostility to the Funding System has been long and persevering; I have proposed the checking of its mischiefs to every man in high station, to whom I have ever had an opportunity of speaking.

Fourteen years ago, when the interest of the debt was only just half what it is now, I urged the adoption of this measure. A thousand times did I endeavour to impress upon the mind of Mr. WINDHAM a sense of the extreme danger of this terrible system, and this is a fact very well known to Mr. ELLIOT, who did not then appear to look upon my sentiments as "*venomous*." I laid a plan before Mr. Windham, which, if it had been adopted, would have insured, at this day, tranquillity, happiness and liberty, instead of what we have the sorrow and the shame to feel. It was not a subject congenial to his turn of mind. He thought my apprehensions groundless. He used to say, that it would be time enough to jump over that ditch *when we came to it*; but, I answered, that, if we staid 'till we got to the ditch, we *never should be able to jump over it*. I told him a thousand times, that if the Funding System were not effectually checked, this nation *must be enslaved*. I told him, that at last, the thing would become wholly *unmanageable*; that it would roll backwards and forwards like the billows of the troubled ocean, swallowing up a certain portion of happiness at every roll, and that at last, it would *produce* the very thing that the war and that all his endeavours had been intended to *prevent*.

And, have I, then, my countrymen, *deluded* you as to this subject, upon which all others depend? Have I told you any thing, as to this greatest of all points, more than I told this statesman many years ago? The only difference is, that you have listened to me, and he did not, because I could not make him see the danger. The application for a Reform of the Parliament we have proved to be just and expedient; but, this is a matter which still admitted of *discussion*. The misery, however, produced by the funding system came and *mixed itself* with the question of Reform. And, whose fault was that? Not mine; for, I would, long ago, have

effectually prevented the misery by checking the funding system; and that, I know, could be done even *now*. But, because the misery existed, were we not to urge our claims for Reform in a peaceable and orderly manner, and with the observance of all the forms and ceremonies prescribed by the Constitution?

No: you have not been *deluded*. It is not a *misfortune* that you have been able to *read*. You have read, and you understand, and will long remember, what you have read. It is quite impossible for any man to foresee what will now take place; but, it must be clear to every one, that the measures which have been adopted will not operate as a cure for any part of the evils that oppress the country. My real belief is, that a few *conciliatory words* would have done much more than all these laws; and, besides, the mere *absence of tumult* is not *tranquillity*. That tranquillity which is worth any thing must have a source other than that of force and of fear. Prosperity never can return under these laws, which, if they continue in force for any length of time, will infallibly reduce the nation to a state of feebleness such as it never before knew. Its character will sink very fast, and, along with its character, its resources and its power. There are now a million people, men and their families, supported by *subscription*, exclusive of the paupers usually so called. In such a state of things how is it possible that the people should not become utterly degraded, while, at the same time, the means of employment are daily growing less and less?

These are *all* the natural and inevitable consequences of a Funding System. A Funding System has never existed in *any* country, without producing indescribable misery. PAINE most aptly observed, that such a System gave *unnatural vigour* 'till it arrived at its climax, and then it produced *unnatural poverty and feebleness*. This has been precisely the

case here; and, as to the nonsense about "a sudden transition from war to peace," it is only the offspring of sickly brains. Here is a great cause of misery and feebleness at work, and nothing can restore happiness and energy except the removal of that cause. Mr. CANNING and his fellow-labourer Mr. ELLIOT may scold about my "poison" and "venom" as long as they please; but to my shop they must come at last, or the malady will end in a most dreadful convulsion.

Before I conclude, let me notice a famous falsehood, which has appeared in the Morning Post of the 18th instant, in the following words:—"COBBETT CHASTISED.—In one instance at least, this Hectoring Bully has met with his deserts. Understanding that he passed the night of Sunday at Mr. Timothy Brown's at Peckham, Mr. LOCKHART repaired thither early yesterday morning, with the intention of chastising the Reformer for his insolence at Winchester. Before Mr. L. had reached the Bricklayers' Arms, he met Cobbett returning to town, and, being furnished with a tremendous horse-whip, he applied it sans ceremony, to the broad and well-adapted shoulders of his antagonist. COBBETT escaped into the shop of Mr. Jones, the apothecary, where he remained for two hours. His scone appears to have suffered considerable damage, as he was seen to leave the apothecary's shop with an enormous plaster over his left eye."

Now, who, at a distance from London, would not believe this to be true? Who would not believe, that there was, at least, truth in some part of it? Who would not believe, that, at any rate, I was at Mr. Brown's on Sunday? Who would believe, that it was wholly false? Nevertheless, I never was within several miles of Peckham last Sunday; I slept at No. 8, Catherine Street on that night; I never was out of that house on the Monday; and I have never seen Lockhart the Brave since he came to

me, with his two witnesses, at the Black Swan at Winchester!

This is "delusion" indeed! It is the readers of these vile publications who are "deluded." This is, however, only a specimen of what Corruption is capable of, and of what she has long practised. It is, after this, hardly necessary to say, that it would be foolish, and even base, in my readers, ever again to listen for one moment to any thing which Corruption's press may say against me, be it what it may, and be it stated with whatever solemnity. I have often said, that these men would not stick at false oaths; and, I am persuaded, that the public will now be of my opinion. Can any one believe, that a wretch, who could sell himself to a purpose like this, would not sell his oath, if he could get a good price for it? I have often said, and I repeat, that those, who have the power over the greater part of the London press, are the very basest of mankind. The wretch, who publishes this "venom," is a staunch partizan of the late measures, and a gross calumniator of the friends of Reform. There needs no more upon the subject. The nation will judge him all in good time.

I am, my worthy Countrymen,

Your friend,

WM. COBBETT.

P. S. The narrative and document, relative to Napoleon, I take from the public papers. It is of great interest; and it is fit, that you all should read it and preserve it. You will know very well what opinion to form on the subject without any commentary of mine.

AN
APPEAL
TO THE
BRITISH NATION,
&c. &c. &c.

If any doubts could have existed in my mind as to the execution of the duty I owed my unfortunate master, these doubts would have been removed by the generous feelings which every Englishman has expressed to whom I have related the story of his sufferings. It is now manifest to me, that the British nation has only to know the facts I am about to state for amelioration of that treatment, which not only imbitters his existence, but which menaces life itself, and affixes a deep stain on the character of a country to whose officers he surrendered himself, in the confidence of its honour and magnanimity.

I shall take care not to abuse the feelings of those I address by an exaggerated statement. I shall confine myself to a strict relation of facts, supported by the document which is annexed. In taking this measure, I rely on the protection of the English nation, as I have not been guilty of any calumny, or intended offence, and I trust an appeal to humanity and the laws of nations will not be slighted or rejected, because it is made by an humble individual in favour of unfortunate greatness.

I am a native of the Island of Corsica; at the age of thirteen I entered the military service in the battalion of Corsican sharpshooters. I was present at the battles of Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Prussian Elau, Friedland, Ratisbonn, Eckmuhl, Aspern, Ypersberg, Wagram, and finally at the battle of Polosk, after which I quitted the profession of a soldier for that of a courier. When the Emperor departed from Fontainebleau for the Island of Elba, I determined on following him without feeling any con-

cern about the rank in which I might continue my services. A short time after our arrival I was presented to the Emperor. He recognized an old soldier who had never failed in the fulfilment of his duty, and had the goodness to grant me the places of messenger to his cabinet and keeper of his port-folio. I returned to France in 1815, in the suite of the Emperor, and after the battle of Waterloo, I accompanied him to Rochefort, and on board the English ship the *Bellerophon*. Finally, I was one of the few faithful servants of his Majesty, who had the happiness to follow him to St. Helena, where, for nearly a year, I served near his person.

The Emperor, on his arrival, resided in the house of a merchant named Balcombe, where he remained for about two months; Mr. Balcombe's house was neither suitable nor convenient; but for this Sir George Cockburn was in no way blameable. On every occasion he endeavoured to conciliate the duties of his office with the respect and delicacy which were due to the rank and misfortunes of his august prisoner.

From thence the Emperor was transferred to Longwood, which was once a farm belonging to the East India Company. In this wretched asylum he still remains. His sleeping chamber is scarcely large enough to contain a bed and a few chairs. The roof of this hovel consists of paper, coated with pitch, which is beginning to rot, and through which the rain water and dew penetrate. In addition to all these inconveniences, the house is infested by rats who devour every thing that they can reach! All the Emperor's linen, even that which was lately sent from England, has been gnawed and completely destroyed by them. For want of closets, the linen is necessarily exposed upon the floor. When the Emperor is at dinner, the rats run about the apartment, and even creep between his feet.

The report of a house having been built for the Emperor, which, it has

been said, was sent from England, is entirely false. Some pieces of timber work have, indeed, arrived; but the governor declared that a house cannot be built in less than three or four years.

When the Emperor was established at Longwood, Sir G. Cockburn introduced the most exact economy into every branch of the expenditure. The Emperor, however, never wanted what was necessary, and the Admiral always took care that nothing should be refused which, with due regard to the locality, the person of the Emperor, and his duty, was indispensable.

It is not, however, economy which the *new* Governor has introduced into the household of the Emperor, *it is absolute want.*

It is to be recollected the Governor took upon himself the entire charge of the maintenance of Napoleon and his suite; but the provisions he furnishes are always in too small a quantity, and also, very often, of bad quality. In the latter case, when the Emperor's house-steward (Cipriani) has found himself under the necessity of sending back the provisions, the articles are never replaced by others more fit for use, and it has been necessary to wait until the following day for a supply.

It has often happened that, on finding himself without any butchers' meat for the Emperor's table, the steward has sent me to purchase a sheep, for which I have paid *four guineas*, and often could only procure *pork* for making soup.

Captain Poppleton, of the 53d regiment, appointed to guard the Emperor, if he is the man of honour I believe him to be, will not fail to bear witness that he has often lent candles to lighten this abode of desolation, as well as bread, butter, poultry, and even salt. I was even, from necessity, in the habit of repairing secretly to the English camp to purchase butter, eggs, and bread, of the soldiers' wives, otherwise the Emperor would often have been without breakfast, and even without dinner!

The Governor sent seven servants to Longwood, but the Emperor was obliged to dismiss four of them from *inability to supply them with food!* on which the Governor granted soldiers' rations to the three that remained.

Often has it also happened that Cipriani, the steward, has purchased from these three servants *the rations of bread* they received from the camp, in consequence of the want of provisions for the Emperor and his suite, which had not arrived.

It is a fact, which will appear incredible, but which is not less true, that *the Emperor is limited to a bottle of wine per day!* Marshal and Madame Bertrand, General Montholon and his Lady, General Gourgand and Count de Las Cazas have also each their bottle.

Marshal Bertrand has three children; M. de Montholon two; and M. de Las Cazas one, about fifteen or sixteen years of age! and for all these mouths the Governor allows no rations!

In this state of things the Emperor has been compelled to sell all his plate, to procure the first necessities of life! I myself broke it in pieces before it was sent to the market. The produce of the sale was deposited, by order of the Governor, in the hands of Mr. Balcombe, and the Emperor was not permitted to touch a single penny.

When the house-steward, wishing to supply the deficiency of the provisions furnished by the Governor, makes purchases himself (which happens every day!) he can only pay them by orders upon Mr. Balcombe.

I used to rise at break of day, and when I did not succeed in shooting a few pigeons, in the neighbourhood of our dwelling, the Emperor frequently had nothing for breakfast. The provisions do not reach Longwood until two or three o'clock in the afternoon, and when they were of so bad a quality that the house-steward had to send them back, the Emperor subsisted entirely on the produce of my shooting. On these occasions, the cook thought

himself fortunate in having brought from Paris some portable cakes, with which he made soup for the Emperor.

There is no water fit for cooking, at Longwood. Very good water may, however, be procured at a distance of twelve hundred yards, which might be conveyed to the Emperor's barracks at an expence of from twelve to fifteen hundred francs.

The house is only supplied by the water which is brought from this fountain; it is open only once during the day; at all other times it is locked. The key is kept by an English officer, who is scarcely ever present when water is wanted. There is a conduit for conveying water to the English camp; but it was thought unnecessary to do as much for the unfortunate Napoleon.

I spare the great and humane English nation a picture of the other insults and humiliations, to which the Emperor is exposed, and also a further detail of the complaints, which the Emperor makes against the Governor, Sir Hudson Lowe. I shall confine myself to observing, that at the last visit the Governor made to Longwood, and at which I was present, he offended him to such a degree, that the Emperor said, "Have you not, then, done with insulting me? Leave my presence, and let me never see you again, unless you have received orders from your government to assassinate me: you will then find me ready to lay open my breast to you. My person is in your power. You may shed my blood."

The climate of Longwood is, besides, most unhealthy; every thing is there in extremes—the humidity, the wind, and the heat.

Admiral Cockburn had marked out a circuit of two leagues for the Emperor's promenade; the present Governor has, without any motive, abridged it to half a league.

The inconveniences of the climate of Longwood, and particularly the humidity to which the Emperor is ex-

posed, have considerably injured his health, and it is the opinion of his English physician that he cannot remain there another year without hazarding his life.

The Emperor having disposed of his plate could dispense with the services of the keeper of the plate, and having been compelled to diminish the number of his horses, for want of a sufficient supply of forage, he has discharged one of the two grooms whom he kept in his service; having no longer any cabinet, the office of *huissier* became equally superfluous, and he thought proper to dismiss me. In the same manner objects of the first necessity, for his household, suffer daily diminution.

Colonel Poniatowski has since been removed from the Island by order of the Governor.

We departed from Saint Helena on the 28th of October, on board the English frigate the *Orontis*, and after having sailed to the Cape of Good Hope, we again returned to St. Helena. There we remained for several days without being suffered to land. The Emperor having been informed of our return, caused some provisions to be purchased at James Town for our voyage to England, which were sent on board the vessel. We were, however under the necessity of sending back the live stock, as the Captain insisted on our killing it immediately. As for the wine, we never tasted it during the voyage, as we would not submit to have the Emperor's present, which was strictly our own, distributed to us in rations by the Captain.

On the 25th of February we arrived at Portsmouth, from whence I proceeded to London, to fulfil the painful but sacred duty which I now discharge, by the publication of this narrative.

LETTER,

By order of the Emperor Napoleon, addressed by General Count Montholon, to Sir Hudson Lowe, British Governor of the Island of St. Helena.

August 25th, 1816.

GENERAL, I have received the Treaty of the 2d of August, 1815, concluded between His Britannic Majesty, the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of Russia, and the King of Prussia, which accompanied your letter of the 23d of July.

The Emperor Napoleon protests against the contents of that Treaty; he is not the prisoner of England. After having placed his abdication in the hands of the Representatives of the Nation, for the *advantage of the Constitution adopted by the French people, and in favour of his Son*, he repaired voluntarily and freely to England, with the view of living there, as a private individual, under the protection of the British laws. *The violation of every law cannot constitute a right.* The person of the Emperor Napoleon is actually in the power of England, but he neither has been, nor is, in the power of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, either in fact or of right, even according to the laws and customs of England, which never included, in the exchange of prisoners, Russians, Prussians, Austrians, Spaniards, or Portuguese, though united to these powers by treaties of alliance and making war conjointly with them.

The Convention of the 2d of August, concluded fifteen days after the Emperor was in England, cannot have of right any effect. It exhibits only a spectacle of the coalition of the four greatest Powers of Europe for the oppression of *a single man*!—a coalition which the opinion of every nation and all the principles of sound morality equally disavow.

The Emperors of Austria and Russia, and the King of Prussia, having neither in fact or in right any claim

over the person of the Emperor Napoleon, could decide nothing respecting him.

Had the Emperor Napoleon been in the power of the Emperor of Austria, that Prince would have recollected the relations which religion and nature have formed *between a father and a son*—relations which are never violated with impunity.

He would have recollected that Napoleon had *four times* restored to him his throne: viz. at Leoben in 1797, at Luneville in 1804; when his armies were under the walls of Vienna, at Presburgh, in 1806, and at Vienna in 1809; when his armies had possession of the capital and three-fourths of the monarchy! That Prince would have recollected the protestations he made to Napoleon at the *bivouac* in Moravia in 1806, and at the interview in Dresden in 1812.

Had the person of the Emperor Napoleon been in the power of the Emperor Alexander, he would have recollected the ties of friendship contracted at Tilsit, at Erfurth, and *during twelve years of daily correspondence.*

He would have recollected the conduct of the Emperor Napoleon the day after the battle of Austerlitz, when, though he could have made him, with the wreck of his army, *prisoner*, contented himself with taking his parole, and *allowed* him to operate his retreat. He would have recollected the dangers to which the Emperor Napoleon personally exposed himself in order to extinguish the fire of Moscow, and to preserve that capital for him—assuredly, that Prince would never have violated the duties of friendship and gratitude towards a friend in misfortune.

Had the person of the Emperor Napoleon been in the power of the King of Prussia, that Sovereign could not have forgotten that it depended on the Emperor, after the Battle of Friedland, to place another Prince on the throne of Berlin. He would not have forgotten, in the presence of a *disarmed* enemy, the protestations of attach-

ment and the sentiments of gratitude which he testified to him in 1812 at the interviews in Dresden.

It accordingly appears from articles 2 and 5, of the Treaty of the 2d of August, that these Princes, being incapable of exercising any influence over the disposal of the Emperor, who was not in their power, accede to what may be done thereon by His Britannic Majesty, who takes upon himself the charge of fulfilling every obligation. These Princes have reproached the Emperor Napoleon with having preferred the protection of the English laws to theirs. The false ideas which the Emperor Napoleon had formed of the liberality of the laws of England, and of the *influence of the opinion of a great, generous, and free people over their government*, decided him to prefer the protection of *these* laws to that of a *father-in-law* or an old friend. The Emperor Napoleon had it in his power to secure, by a diplomatic treaty, whatever was personal to himself, by putting himself either at the head of the army of the Loire, or at the head of the army of the Gironde, commanded by General Clausel; but wishing, henceforth, for nothing but retirement and the protection of the laws of a free state, either English or American, all stipulations appeared to him unnecessary. He conceived that the English people were more bound by a conduct which was, on his part, frank, noble, and full of confidence, than they would have been by the most solemn treaties. He has been *deceived*, but this error will for ever cause *true* Britons to blush, and will, in the present as well as the future generations, be a *proof of the bad faith of the English Administration*.

Austrian and Prussian commissioners are arrived at St. Helena. If the object of their mission be the fulfilment of a part of the duties which the Emperors of Austria and Russia have contracted by the Treaty of the 2d of August, and to take care that the English Agents, in a small colony, in the midst of the Ocean, do not fail in

the respect due to a Prince connected with these Sovereigns by the bonds of *relationship* and so many other ties, traits of the character which belong to these two Monarchs will be recognized in this proceeding; but you, Sir, have declared that these Commissioners have neither *the right nor the power of giving any opinion on what may be passing on this Rock!*

The English ministers have caused the Emperor Napoleon to be transported to St. Helena, at the distance of 2000 leagues from Europe! This rock, situated within the tropics, and 500 leagues from any continent, is subject to the devouring heats of these latitudes. It is covered with clouds and fogs, during three-fourths of the year, and is at once the most arid and the most humid country in the world. Such a climate is most inimical to the health of the Emperor, and hatred must have dictated the choice of this residence, as well as the instructions given by the English Ministry to the officers commanding in the Island.

They have even been ordered to call the Emperor Napoleon *General*, as if it were wished to oblige him to consider himself as never having reigned in France.

The reasons which determined him not to assume an *incognito* name, as he might have resolved to do on leaving France, were these: First Magistrate for life of the Republic under the title of *First Consul*, he concluded the Preliminaries of London and the Treaty of Amiens with the King of Great Britain; and received, as *ambassadors*, Lord Cornwallis, Mr. Merry, and Lord Whitworth, who resided in that quality at *his Court*. He accredited to the *King of England*, Count Otto and General Andreossi, who resided as Ambassadors at the Court of Windsor. When, after an exchange of letters between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the *two Monarchies*, Lord Lauderdale came to Paris invested with full powers from the King of England, he treated with

the Plenipotentiaries possessing full powers from the *Emperor Napoleon*, and remained for several months at the *Court of the Tuileries*; when Lord Castlereagh afterwards signed, at Châtillon, the *ultimatum* which the Allied Powers presented to the Plenipotentiaries of the *Emperor Napoleon*, he thereby acknowledged the fourth dynasty.

This *ultimatum* was more advantageous than the Treaty of Paris, but it was required that France should renounce Belgium and the left Bank of the Rhine. This was contrary to the propositions made at Francfort, and the proclamations of the Allied Powers, and contrary to the oath by which, at his coronation, the Emperor swore to maintain the integrity of the empire. The Emperor then conceived that natural boundaries were equally necessary for the security of France and the equilibrium of Europe; he judged that the French nation, in the circumstances in which it then was, had better incur all the hazards of war than submit to this partition.

France would have secured her integrity, and with it would have maintained her honour, had not treachery been summoned to the assistance of the Allies.

The Treaty of the 2d of August, and the Act of the British Parliament, called the Emperor, *Napoleon Buonaparte*, and gave him not the title of General. The title of *General Buonaparte* is doubtless eminently glorious: the Emperor bore it at Lodi, at Castiglione, at Rivoli, at Arcola, at Leoben, among the Pyramids, and at Aboukir; but for the last seventeen years he has borne those of *First Consul* and *Emperor*. To style him *General*, now, is to declare that he has neither been *chief magistrate* of the Republic, nor a *Sovereign* of the fourth Dynasty. Those who believe that nations are like flocks, which by divine right, belong to a few particular families, have notions which are neither of the present age, nor even in the spirit of the English Legislature, which has several times

changed the order of its Dynasty, because the reigning Princes not having participated in the great changes which took place in opinions, became inimical to the happiness of the majority of the nation. For Kings are only hereditary Magistrates who exist solely for the happiness of nations, and not nations for the satisfaction of kings.

The same spirit of malice dictated the order by which the Emperor Napoleon was prevented from writing or receiving any letter which has not previously been opened and read by the English Ministers and the officers of St. Helena.

The possibility of his receiving letters from his mother, his wife, his son, or his brothers, has thus been interdicted; and when he wished to remove the inconvenience of having all his letters read by subaltern officers, and to send sealed letters to the Prince Regent, he was informed that none but open letters could be passed—such were the orders of the Ministry. This measure stands in need of no reflection; it gives rise to strange ideas concerning the Administration by which it was dictated; it would even have been disavowed at Algiers. Letters have arrived for general officers in the suite of the Emperor; they were broken open and delivered to you; but you refused to communicate them because they had not been received through the channel of the English Minister. They had to travel back four thousand leagues, and these officers endured the mortification of knowing that there existed on the island accounts of their wives, their parents and their children, of which they could not be informed in less than six months. The heart revolts at such treatment!! Permission could not be obtained to subscribe, occasionally, for the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, any of the French Journals, or even to get a few detached numbers of the *Times*, conveyed to Longwood. In consequence of an application, made on board the *Northumberland*, a few books were sent; but all such

as related to the affairs of latter years were carefully kept back. It was then wished to establish a correspondence with a bookseller of London, in order to obtain directly such books as might be wanted, and those which related to the events of the day; but this was forbidden. An English author, who wrote an account of his journey through France, which was printed at London, took the trouble of sending you a copy of the work, for the purpose of having it presented to the *Emperor*; but you did not think fit to transmit it to him, because it had not been sent through the medium of your government. It is besides understood that other books have been sent which were not delivered, because some were directed to the *Emperor Napoleon*, and others to *Napoleon the Great*. The English ministry is not authorized to order any of these vexations. The law, *though unworthy the British Parliament*, considers the *Emperor Napoleon* as a *prisoner of war*; now a prisoner of war is never forbidden to subscribe for newspapers, or to receive printed books—*Such a prohibition exists only in the cells of the Inquisition*.

The Island of Saint Helena is ten leagues in circumference, and is inaccessible on every side. The coast is surrounded by brigs, and posts are stationed within sight of each other, so that all communication with the sea is rendered impracticable. There is but one little village, called James Town, where vessels arrive and depart. To prevent the escape of any individual from the island, it is only necessary to guard the coast. There could, therefore, be but one object in interdicting communication with the interior of the island—namely, to prevent a ride of about eight or ten miles, the privation of which, according to the opinion of medical men, could not take place without shortening the life of the *Emperor*.

The *Emperor* has been placed at Longwood, a situation exposed to every wind that blows, in a tract of

land sterile and uninhabitable, without water, and susceptible of no kind of cultivation. There is a circuit of about twelve hundred uncultivated toises. On an eminence, at a distance of eleven or twelve hundred toises, a camp has been established, and another has recently been placed at an equal distance, in an opposite direction; consequently in the midst of tropical heats the eye is met by camps on every side.

Admiral Malcombe having conceived that a tent would be extremely useful to the *Emperor*, caused one to be fitted up by his seamen, at about twenty paces from the front of the house: *beneath this tent is the only spot which is shaded from the sun*. The *Emperor* has, however, every reason to be well satisfied with the spirit which animated the officers and men of the brave 53rd regiment, as he likewise had with the crew of the *Northumberland*. The house at Longwood was first built to serve as a barn for the Company's farm. The Deputy Governor caused some rooms to be made in it and converted it into a country house, but it was never fit to be inhabited. For this year past workmen have been constantly employed, and the *Emperor*, to the injury of his health, has been obliged to submit to the inconvenience of living in a house which is in the progress of building. The apartment in which he sleeps is not large enough to contain an ordinary-sized bed; but every new building at Longwood would prolong the inconvenience of the presence of workmen. This miserable Island, however, presents many fine positions, covered with trees, gardens, and even neat houses, among which is *Plantation House*; but the *ministry* gave strict orders that we were not to occupy that house; had we been permitted to do so, your treasury might have been spared the expenses which were laid out at Longwood, in building huts roofed with paper, coated with pitch, and which are now useless. You have interdicted all correspondence

between us and the inhabitants of the island, you have in fact placed the house at Longwood in a state of *seclusion*, you have even obstructed any communication which might take place with the *officers of the garrison*. It seems as though it had been studied to deprive us of the few resources which this miserable country presents, and we are as wretched as if we were doomed to live on the uncultivated and uninhabited rock of the Isle of Ascension.

During the four months that you have resided at St. Helena, you have, Sir, aggravated the unfortunate situation of the Emperor. Count Bertrand observed to you that you were even violating the laws laid down by your legislature, and trampling on the rights of general officers prisoners of war; you replied, that you would act according to the letter of your instructions, which were even more rigid than the conduct you had adopted. I have the honour to be,

Mr. General,

Your very humble and

(Signed) obedient Servant,
GENERAL COUNT DE MONTHOLON.

P.S. I had signed this Letter, *ir*, before I received yours of the 17th. You have annexed thereto an account, by way of estimate, of an annual sum of twenty thousand pounds sterling, which you think necessary for covering the expenses of the establishment of Longwood, *after having made every reduction which you conceive possible*. The discussion of this estimate can in no way concern us. The Emperor's table is scarcely furnished with the most common necessities, all the provisions are of bad quality and four times dearer than at Paris. You demand from the Emperor the sum of twelve thousand pounds sterling, your government only allowing

you *eight* thousand pounds sterling to defray all these expenses. I have already had the honour of informing you that the Emperor possesses no funds, that for this year past he has *neither written nor received any Letter*, and that he is entirely ignorant of all that is passing in Europe.

Forcibly transported to this Rock, without the possibility of writing or receiving any letter, he now finds himself totally at the discretion of the English Agents.

The Emperor has always wished and still wishes to defray all his expenses of every description. This he will do whenever you render it possible, by removing the interdiction by which the merchants of the island are prevented from transacting business for him, and whenever he shall be exempt from all inquisition on your part or that of your agents. As soon as the necessities of the Emperor are made known in Europe, those persons who feel interested in his happiness will transmit the funds requisite to provide for his support.

Lord Bathurst's Letter, which you have communicated to me, gives rise to strange ideas. Are not your Ministers aware that the spectacle of a *great man struggling with adversity* is the most sublime of all others? are they ignorant that Napoleon, at St. Helena, in the midst of persecutions of every kind, to which he opposes only the firmness of resolution, is *greater, more sacred, and more venerable than when he was seated on the first Throne in the world*, where he was *so long the arbiter of Kings*?

Those who are wanting in respect to Napoleon, in his present situation, only degrade their *own characters* and the *Nation which they represent*.

(Signed)

GENERAL COUNT DE MONTHOLON

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

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